



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**APPROVED**  
**City of Fort Lauderdale**  
**Community Services Board**  
**October 14, 2019 – 4:00 P.M.**  
**City Commission Chambers, City Hall**  
**Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**

**October 2019-September 2020**

<b>MEMBERS</b>		<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Noah Szugajew, Chair	P	1	0
April Kirk, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Jonathan Bennett	P	1	0
Elizabeth Cupido	P	1	0
Christina Disbrow	P	1	0
Mary Kinirons	P	1	0
Richard Morris	P	1	0
Marisol Simon (arr. 4:07)	P	1	0
Dana Somerstein	A	0	1

**Staff Present**

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager  
Christopher Leonard, HOPWA Housing Inspector  
Jamie Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communication to the City Commission**

None.

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- **Quorum Requirement – As of August 26, 2019, there are 9 appointed members to the Board, which means 5 constitutes a quorum**

Chair Szugajew called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present at the meeting.

**II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

The Board and Staff members present introduced themselves at this time.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 9, 2019**

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Kirk, seconded by Mr. Morris, to approve the minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**IV. CDBG**

- **Updates, Performance Outcomes for FY 18-19**

Ms. Williams advised that representatives of the agencies receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds would provide updates.

Diane Smith, representing the South Florida Institute on Aging (SoFIA), formerly known as Impact Broward, advised that the agency received \$41,000 of their initial request of \$48,000. The Institute served 54 Fort Lauderdale residents against a goal of 48 and exceeded all outcomes.

93% of elderly individuals receiving services reported improvements to their home environment, nutritional condition, and/or feelings of well-being, as compared to a goal of 85%. 92% of senior companions reported sharing information with clients to link them to resources during in-service meetings against a goal of 80%. 96% of clients reported greater satisfaction with their lives as a result of weekly visits against a goal of 86%. 96% of senior companions reported being more active and able to live independently, and 98% of caregivers reported a reduction in their levels of stress, each against a goal of 90%.

Ms. Smith continued that the Institute also added two new programs:

- SoFIA Fellows: enables older adults who are having difficulty re-entering the workforce to attend training classes and internships
- Friendly Visitors: uses lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) volunteers to provide friendly visits to isolated older members of the LGBT community and their caregivers

Ms. Simon arrived at 4:07 p.m.

Mr. Morris requested additional information on SoFIA's partnerships with other community agencies. Ms. Smith advised that the agency has entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with roughly 20 organizations in Broward County, many of which provide case management services and refer isolated older adults to SoFIA. The Institute serves individuals through a variety of programs and provides training on caregiving services, volunteer management, and other needs to partner organizations.

Nick Green, representing the Broward Partnership for the Homeless, stated that CDBG funds supported the continued operation of a 230-bed Homeless Assistance Center. They were used toward the purchase of food and provision of bus passes for adult program participants who are employed, seeking employment, or attending medical, legal, housing, or other appointments as needed.

The Partnership's award of \$37,000 was fully expended. They served 919 unduplicated clients against a goal of 750. 100% of participants identified as heads of household achieved at least one case plan goal as indicated on their individual service plan. 42% of participants exited shelter to stable housing against a goal of 35%. The year-to-date goal

for this indicator is 44%. 48% of Fort Lauderdale participants received bus passes for travel to employment activities and other services against a goal of 50% in the current quarter; however, the overall achievement rate was 57%.

191 individuals received shelter services in the fourth quarter, with a year-to-date total of 919. Of the 919, 729 of the individuals were adults identified as heads of household. Of the 159 households exiting shelter during the fourth quarter, 66 obtained stable housing. Of the 156 adults entering the shelter in the fourth quarter, 75 obtained a bus pass. The agency did not experience any issues or concerns during the program year, and all monthly invoices were submitted on time.

Cassandra Dennis, representing Jack and Jill Children's Center, stated that the agency used CDBG funds to offer Promising Future Empowerment scholarships. They were awarded \$37,000, which allowed them to serve 12 clients. 87.3% of children in their program meet or exceed growth range in social, language, emotional, physical, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics categories. 94.5% of preschool-aged children met or exceeded expectations in mathematics, printing, language, and vocabulary. A total of 63 children, including CDBG-funded clients, received on-site therapeutic services, all of which are offered on-site.

Jack and Jill Children's Center recently welcomed a new Director of Education, who is expected to help enhance existing services. 100% of parents provided with child care maintained employment through the year, and 89% of these maintained or improved their incomes.

Michael Barron, representing Women in Distress of Broward County, reported that the agency met the goals outlined in its grant application. The agency served 58 residents from Fort Lauderdale in its shelters, some of whom were carried over from the previous fiscal year.

Services provided at the shelter included therapy, advocacy, education and prevention, and hotline calls. Of the 628 Fort Lauderdale residents served, only 35 were served using CDBG funds. This represents just over 5.5% of clients.

Mr. Morris asked how many of the agency's hotline calls were transferred from 2-1-1 Broward. Mr. Barron replied that he would provide Ms. Williams with this information for dissemination to the Board members. Calls may also be routed from the Fort Lauderdale Police Department or victims' advocates.

Ms. Williams noted that the HOPE Fair Housing Center did not have a representative present, as their office was closed due to the federal holiday. Their report was sent to the members electronically.

Ms. Williams advised that the next two presenting agencies are Community-Based Development Organizations (CBDOs).

Linda Taylor, representing Housing Opportunities, Mortgage Assistance, and Effective Neighborhood Solutions (HOMES), Inc., stated that the agency received CBDO funds for its self-sufficiency program, which has 21 beds for young people who have aged out of foster or relative care between the ages of 18 and 24 years nine months. The agency met 100% of its goal for youth assisted through intake, serving 25 individuals. 16 of these individuals completed the employability and career assessment, also reaching 100% of that goal along with resume and job interview preparations.

While the organization had anticipated that each individual would go through a minimum of three employment interviews, only 50% attended three interviews before they were hired. 25% received employment following their first interviews, with another 25% receiving employment after the second interview.

100% of individuals completed a monthly budget with their life coaches, and HOMES, Inc. also identified a funder who helped to provide a financial literacy program for the year. Participants received a group counseling session each month and had the opportunity for individual counseling sessions with a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-approved counselor. The agency partners with multiple community organizations as well as businesses that provide clients with internships. HOMES, Inc. also met its financial outcomes on a quarterly basis, maximizing the funds awarded to them.

Marie Wells, representing Mount Bethel Human Services, advised that the agency has successfully served 40 clients through their food pantry, referral, parenting, or homelessness prevention services. Clients of the food pantry attend the program consistently and may also receive cleaning, pet food, and maintenance products for their homes. Mount Bethel has partnerships with Faith Farm, the Salvation Army, the United Way, Feeding South Florida, and Second Chance Society.

In the area of referral services, clients receive referrals, information, items that pertain to everyday living, or employment services. If a client is hired but does not have the required attire for their positions, they are referred to a partner agency that can help provide them with clothing. If a client is in school, they may receive funds to cover textbooks, school uniforms, or exam fees. Parenting services focuses on children between the ages of 6 and 11 and address anger or aggressive/impulsive behavior.

Mount Bethel addresses homelessness prevention in two ways: by partnering with the Salvation Army to provide shelter, and/or by connecting clients to landlords who provide affordable housing and may work with clients to provide them with a place to stay.

Chair Szugajew asked if the new fiscal year will bring new requirements for all agencies. Ms. Williams clarified that the requirements are different for certified CBDOs. Because Mount Bethel is located in a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA), the City hopes to work with the agency on documentation of an area-wide strategy. This will show

that at least 75% of the individuals served within the neighborhood meet low-income criteria. Ms. Williams concluded that all agencies exhausted their budgets prior to the fiscal year end of September 30, with the exception of \$2.

Vice Chair Kirk asked if a report was provided from Turnstone Development. Ms. Williams replied that she would follow up with this agency, as their representatives are based in Chicago and would need to travel. They have submitted reports along with their monthly invoices, as required. It was determined that the Board would see these reports on a quarterly basis in the future.

Ms. Williams concluded that HOPE Fair Housing Center has asked to make their presentation to the Board at the November 2019 meeting.

## **V. HOPWA**

### **• Budget Funding for Additional Case Managers**

Ms. Williams explained that it is the Board's role, rather than Staff's, to make funding recommendations. Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) Housing Inspector Christopher Leonard provided handouts showing two different funding scenarios for the client subsidy portion of the roughly \$900,000 grant from the state and how these funds would be distributed.

Ms. Williams provided an overview of the state grant funding for the new Board members, stating that earlier in the year, the state of Florida asked certain municipalities if they could help the state expend funding so it would not have to be returned to HUD. Fort Lauderdale determined that this was a good opportunity for Broward County, as HOPWA is a County-wide program. Because the offer was tendered in September, funds would need to be spent before the next June 30, when the state's fiscal year will end.

The City partnered with a working group of HOPWA providers and County personnel to review the funding, which was determined to be able to serve approximately 75 clients using short-term vouchers. Because most clients will need more than 21 weeks to achieve stability, it was determined that time-limited vouchers for no more than 18 months would be the best subsidy. If each household is subsidized with a maximum of \$1200/month, the program can serve 75 households at \$90,000/month or \$540,000 for six months. The six-month time limit is due to the expiration of state grant dollars in roughly six months by June 30, 2020.

One proposal to continue serving these clients was to use HOPWA reserve dollars which have been carried over from previous years. They may extend the program for an additional six or 12 months. Once the \$540,000 in state funding is used by June 30, the City must use its own reserves to continue the program. The City's Legal Department has already reviewed the draft contract provided by Housing and Community Development and will provide a final version.

Ms. Simon asked if it would be possible to serve more than 75 clients. Ms. Williams advised that once the state funds expire, the burden will be on the City to provide additional resources to support those clients. The options open to the Board would provide just over \$1.8 million or \$2.3 million to continue the program after June 30.

- **Case Management Presentation (Legal Services, Care Resource, SunServe)**

Tiffany Arieagus, Director of Case Management for SunServe, stated that SunServe, Legal Aid Service of Broward County, and Care Resource wish to address the proposal as a united front. Wraparound support services include legal and housing case management. They wish to assist in the process of housing 75 households, as submitted to the state in the originally proposed plan and time frame of 12 to 18 months using short-term vouchers. State funds would also cover the addition of two housing case managers at SunServe and Care Resource, while Legal Aid would add one half-time employee.

The addition of these positions would allow the agencies to complete initial intake for clients and provide registration and enterprises, including HOPWA, Short-Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utility (STRMU), and Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) applications. They would also provide client assessment on a self-sufficiency matrix and vulnerability matrix, participation in housing plans, lease review, landlord/tenant legal issues, registration to 2-1-1 Broward for homeless clients, and other information release forms.

Housing case managers try to assist clients with local resources as well, and make sure clients complete centralized eligibility intake requirements and all services necessary for medical care, mental health services, substance abuse (if needed), and others. Clients experiencing domestic violence are referred to Women in Distress of Broward County. Other needs may include food stamps, identification, Medicaid, Project AIDS care services, veterans' services, and family reunification assistance.

The three agencies are requesting two housing case managers, one at SunServe and one at Care Resources, at \$65,000 per agency over two years. Legal Aid would receive one half full-time employee at \$32,000 per year over two years. They feel this is the best way to achieve success with the funding available.

Chair Szugajew noted that this would spend the full \$540,000 from the state, as well as \$130,000 for the housing case managers and \$64,000 for the legal position. Ms. Williams emphasized that it is recommended the funding for positions not come from state funding, as this could create request for proposal (RFP) issues. In addition, the positions would need to be extended beyond the state deadline of June 30, 2020. These positions should be funded from reserve dollars. The City is not the grantee, but a sub-recipient of the grant, which allows them to use 7% of funding for administrative uses.

Ms. Williams continued that the 24 months requested by the three agencies is reasonable, as there will be "start-up" requirements such as reviewing the waiting list and assessing

and selecting clients for the program. There will also need to be a winding-down of the program at its end. The options presented to the Board did not calculate the proposed two-year time frame, which would use reserve funds, but dealt only with the state subsidy portion. The reserve amount used would be \$194,000 per year for each of the two years.

The members discussed the proposal, with Ms. Kinirons pointing out that reserve funds from fiscal year (FY) 2017-2018 and FY 2018-2019 would total \$3.3 million rather than \$2.9 million. Ms. Williams advised that \$421,834 is available from FY 2017-2018; however, since the September 2019 meeting, the City's Finance Department has advised that they are not certain of this amount, as there are other agencies funded using older dollars whose invoices have not yet been processed. The remaining funds will be treated as carried-over funds.

Ms. Williams clarified that once the Board has made its recommendation today, 30 days' public notice must be provided for the amendment of the appropriate fiscal years. The recommendation is then taken before the City Commission. She estimated that the 30 days' notice will coincide with the provision of the state contract, which means the items can be brought before the City Commission at one meeting. After that time, information must be posted with HUD for the amendment of federal HOPWA dollars, and HUD provides public notice for 15 additional days. Once this is complete, HUD sends the City their clearance to move forward.

Mr. Morris expressed concern that it could be possible to spend the entire \$540,000 from the state before June 30, 2020 if the carried-over funds are not calculated accurately. Ms. Williams explained that once the \$540,000 is spent, the program must be prepared to carry on for another six to 12 months with case management and legal services. It is these services which the Board is asked to vote upon through one of the two options.

Ms. Williams continued that the City is technically administering the program: the case managers and legal service providers are asked to screen potential clients and send them to the City. The City performs a secondary review and then cuts rental checks to the landlords rather than to the agencies.

Vice Chair Kirk expressed concern that the City may find this process unmanageable if the 7% for administrative costs is not sufficient to fund this task. Ms. Williams stated that the City has already agreed to provide Housing and Community Development with additional support from the City's General Fund. Staff time will be charged to the General Fund as needed.

Ms. Simon asked again if it would be possible to serve more than 75 clients, even if this meant using additional reserves. Ms. Williams replied that it may be possible for another 25 clients to be added to the program at another \$180,000, using subsidy funds. The Board discussed potential changes to the proposed maximum and minimum time frame of the program, with Chair Szugajew pointing out that clients achieving self-sufficiency would be moved off the program's services.

Ms. Williams noted that the monthly subsidy cost is a projected figure: some households may use the full \$1200/month, while others may require less. She recommended that the number of clients be left fluid according to the language of the program, such as serving “up to” a certain number. Ms. Arieagus estimated that each of the two proposed case managers could serve 35 to 36 clients. The Board agreed by consensus that the program would have an 18-month time frame for subsidies.

Ms. Williams advised that if the Board wishes the program to be expanded to 100 clients, this would require an estimated additional \$360,000. The representatives of the three agencies confirmed that they can meet the program’s goals with the proposed dollar amount. Tony Karrat, representing Legal Aid, noted that this agency is already providing services to more clients than they are expected to serve: if there are to be more clients in the program, there may be a need for additional funding to cover these clients’ services.

Chair Szugajew pointed out that adding more clients could result in halving the City’s HOPWA reserves. Ms. Kinirons suggested, however, that additional reserve dollars may be available once final calculations have been made regarding carried-over dollars. It was clarified that no funds from the current fiscal year have been factored into calculations thus far.

Ms. Disbrow asked if there is a required or recommended amount that must be kept in reserves. Ms. Williams pointed out that there are no true reserve funds: all monies result from the state receiving more funding than anticipated in previous years, or agencies not expending their full allotment of cash. These dollars have been carried forward in expectation of the HOPWA modernization formula, which was believed to represent a funding cut. Spending caps have also been put into place with programs such as STRMU in the absence of extenuating circumstances. Chair Szugajew pointed out, however, that the Board had made a decision for several years to maintain reserves in case of a funding cut.

Ms. Disbrow also requested an update on the future of the HOPWA modernization formula. Ms. Williams replied that this formula takes effect over a five-year period, which is currently in year two. While she recommended caution for the remaining three years, she noted that the formula does not anticipate any jurisdiction receiving more than a 5% cut in their annual award.

Vice Chair Kirk advocated for serving 75 clients in the program while retaining some funds for future use. Mr. Morris proposed reviewing the program after the first six to eight months before determining the remaining length of time to be budgeted. Ms. Williams cautioned that the Board should use fluid language, such as referring to a maximum amount up to which may be spent or a maximum time frame, in order to comply with public notice requirements.



Ms. Williams added that clients who have not reached self-sufficiency within the time frame of the program can be moved to the regular Tenant-Based Rental Voucher (TBRV) program. Staff has already spoken with the agencies that provide these vouchers so they do not backfill the TBRV program when individuals leave it, so vacancies are open if clients from the proposed program need longer-term support.

**Motion** made by Ms. Simon, seconded by Ms. Kinirons, to commit to serving up to 100 clients for up to 18 months.

It was further clarified that this proposal would use state subsidy funds for the first six months of the program.

Ms. Simon and Ms. Kinirons **amended** their **motion** and **second** as follows: to commit to helping up to 100 clients up to 18 months, the first six months to be funded through the state funds and the last 12 months from the rollover HUD funding that [they] have. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

It was strongly encouraged that Board members be present at the City Commission meeting at which their recommendation would be discussed.

**Motion** made by Ms. Disbrow, seconded by Mr. Morris, to approve funding for up to two years of housing case management for two case managers and a half-time Legal Aid employee for two years. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

It was clarified that the total dollar amount to which Ms. Disbrow and Mr. Morris' **motion** had referred would be \$324,000.

- **Assessment Process for Time Limited Vouchers**

Ms. Williams noted that the assessment tool has been prepared by Broward House. It was clarified that the tool is intended to augment assessment processes that are already available, and will be available to all partner agencies. Because it has not yet been reviewed by all provider agencies, it was determined that this tool would be tabled until the November 2019 meeting for further discussion.

## **VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

- **Reminder that November's Meeting will be on Thursday, November 14**

Vice Chair Kirk asked if there are plans for a joint meeting between the City Commission and the Board thus far. Ms. Williams replied that the Commission is working toward this goal, which was originally intended to be held "after the summer break."

Mr. Morris asked if an update on the group housing pilot project is available. Ms. Williams replied that this will be shared in the HOPWA outcomes in November.

## **VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

## **VIII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

Ms. Williams recommended that the November 2019 Agenda include an orientation/training element for the new Board members. Chair Szugajew added that the reports from HOPE Fair Housing Center and Turnstone Development should also be provided at the next meeting. He concluded that the Board would like a monthly report on the state portion of the grant program and would review the assessment tool.

## **IX. COMMUNICATIONS TO CITY COMMISSION**

None.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]